

BALLINABRANNA NATIONAL SCHOOL

Milford

Co. Carlow

Roll No. 17756D

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3rd of September 2021

Welcome Back! It is wonderful to welcome our pupils back to school for what we hope will be a full and exciting academic year ahead. Our new Junior Infants are settling in quickly to school life with their teacher Ms Hayden and we extend our warmest wishes to them, their parents and our new pupils throughout the school for many happy years ahead in Ballinabranna NS.

To our staff this year we are delighted to welcome back Ms. S. Amond and we also welcome our newest staff member Mr. Mahon who is teaching 2nd class.

Our children, staff and the wider community have shown our school tremendous support throughout the Covid-19 pandemic by following all the government advice and safety measures to reduce the risk of infection to the children and others.

We thank you deeply for this continued and important work!

Parents Association Outstanding Support- In the last term our PA held a fantastic RunAsOne 5km virtual run and clothes collection. Incredibly this, and their previous fundraising enabled the school and children to benefit from a staggering €6335 in support towards our IT needs. Along with the Department of Education's IT grant this means we have been able to install Interactive Panels in Junior Infants, Senior Infants and 1st class and purchase additional I-Pads to ensure that we now have a complete class set, (29) so each child will have their own i-pad to work from in class during digital learning time.

This is an unbelievable achievement in a short space of time and one that every child in the school will benefit from!

We are extremely grateful for all the support received which helped this to happen.

Student Council – Our Student Council 2020-2021 have one last treat in store for our classes before this year's new council are elected. They have purchased footballs and basketballs for each class to use during yard time! Well done to the Council.

Confirmation We were delighted to see the pupils from 6th class 2020-2021 receive the Sacrament of Confirmation on Saturday the 20th of August. The children had a wonderful, prayerful celebration of the sacrament and we wish them every continued success as they move on to Secondary School.

First Holy Communion We look forward to the children in 3rd class receiving the Sacrament of First Holy Communion on the 18th of September in St. Fintan's Church Ballinabranna. We are very grateful to Fr. Hennessy, Deacon Patrick Roche and Leighlin Parish for all they have done to ensure that the children can receive the sacraments this year.

School Uniform - Parents are asked to ensure that their child wears the proper uniform – navy jumper, navy trouser / skirt, light blue shirt and red tie. Children should wear suitable footwear and P.E uniform (navy tracksuit bottoms, navy sweatshirt and blue polo shirt) on P.E. days only. Navy hoodies are not part of the school PE uniform, a navy sweatshirt should be worn, the hood can be caught and pulled during sport causing injury. Thank you for your support and cooperation with this.

St. Abbans Prize – Last year the children in 5th and 6th class participated in a virtual athletics competition organised by St. Abbans. They were entered into a draw and have won a 50 euro One4all voucher for the school. This will be used to purchase needed sports equipment. Well done 5th and 6th 2020-2021.

Donation – Thank you to Chadwicks who have made a generous donation of handsanitiser to the school. This is greatly appreciated.

Music Generation – We are very excited for the return of Music Generation to the school this year as singing and musical instruments return to school with ventilation and appropriate spacing in place.

Junior Infants to 2nd class will benefit from the early music programme with tutor Ali Behan.

3rd to 6th class will welcome Ailbhe Kehoe who will start an instrumental programme with the children using the recorder.

Over the next few years, we hope that children may progress from the recorder to learning to play the flute with Music Generation Carlow.

To make it easier for parents we will purchase the recorders and parents can pay the school directly for them. Each child 3rd-6th will have their own individual recorder that will not be shared with any other pupil. Next year flutes will be available in older classes to rent at very low cost from Music Generation. Recorders will be available later this term.

We will send home further information before Music Generation begins later this month.

Languages Pilot Programme – We are delighted to hear that our application to be part of the new pilot programme for modern languages in primary school has been successful and that our senior classes will benefit from a 6 week pilot this year. Further info to follow.

Contact details- If your contact details have changed, please inform the school immediately. It is vital that we can contact you during the school day where needed. If you have moved to a new house or changed email address over the summer, please let Brenda in the office know. If your child's medical information or needs have changed, please update the school accordingly.

School Books- We ask all parents to pay the book fee immediately. If there are any difficulties in this regard, please speak to Ms Corrigan in confidence. We thank parents for their prompt payment which ensures that the book rental scheme can be maintained in the future. Online cashless payment is available through the FunkyFrog app.

Nut allergy – There are children in our school who have a severe allergic reaction to nuts. This allergic reaction (anaphylactic shock) can occur through ingestion of peanuts/nut products, cross contamination and breathing peanuts through the air.

As this is a life-threatening condition, we are asking for your help in minimising the risk for this child by:

- Avoiding giving children peanuts in their school lunches
- Avoiding giving peanut butter sandwiches, other spreads containing nuts such as Nutella and snacks/bars containing nuts or labelled 'may contain nut traces' in school lunches
- Ask your child/children NOT to share lunches.

Due to **the serious nature of the risk** it is important that all parents follow these guidelines to reduce the risk of allergic reaction for these children.

Insurance – 24-hour pupil insurance is available from Allianz at the low cost of €9 per pupil. This cost has been included on the September Book Bill for each class. To avail of this cover please ensure that you have paid by the 24th of September. Under this policy, the pupil is covered 24 hours a day, for School Activities, social domestic and leisure activities (including during school holidays). Claim forms are available from the school or from the www.allianz.ie/schools website.

Public Service Agreement Hours Our school teaching staff worked the additional hours outside of the school day under the Public Service Agreement in 2020-2021 by:

- A planning day in August Staff Meetings and Staff Planning
- Continuous Professional Development Teacher's Personal Preparation

Child Protection - Our school fully endorses the *Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017* and follows the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017*. Our Child Protection Policy is available to parents to view. Sandra Corrigan is the Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection and Eddie O' Connor is the Deputy Designated Liaison Person. If you have any concerns about any Child Protection issue you can speak to these staff members.

Healthy Eating We encourage all children to eat a healthy lunch every day. We ask that parents continue to provide children with a sensible choice of nutritious foods for their lunch.

On Friday children may bring a sweet/savoury treat with their lunch, we recommend that this fits in the cupped palm of their hand as this is the recommended portion size for a child.

Our School Dentist recommends water as the best drink for children as other drinks can cause tooth decay – *no fizzy drinks please*.

Once again, thank you for your co-operation in ensuring that the children in Ballinabranna NS enjoy a healthy nutritious lunch every day. This has a hugely positive impact on their ability to concentrate, learn and participate in class activities.

Parent – Teacher Communication We encourage parents to keep us fully informed of any issues which may be affecting your child. In dealing with problems or concerns “A stitch in time saves nine.” If you wish to discuss an issue in depth with your child's teacher, please contact the class teacher or school to arrange an appointment to speak with them.

Upcoming School Events First Holy Communion (3rd class) Sat 18th of September 2020 at 11am
School Calendar 2021-2022 Half Day 12 noon for Teacher Training for the Primary Language Curriculum Weds 13th Oct.
October Midterm - closed Monday 25th - Fri 29th of October
Christmas - closed Thursday 23rd Dec – Wednesday 5th Jan (reopens Thursday 6th Jan 2022)
February Midterm - closed Monday 21st of February to Fri 25th of February 2022
St. Patrick's Day - closed Thursday 17th of March and Friday 18th of March
Easter- closed Monday 11th of April to Fri 22nd of April
May Bank Holiday - closed Monday 2nd of May
June Bank Holiday - closed Friday 3rd of June, Monday 6th and Tuesday 7th of June.
Last day of school before summer holidays Thursday 30th of June.